

## SAVING "OLD SOUTH."

**The Debt Which the United States  
Owes to Mrs. Hemenway.**

The ground on which the Old South meeting house in Boston stands was the dwelling place of Governor Winthrop. Benjamin Franklin was baptized in this meeting house. The voices of Adams and Hancock and Warren and Washington have been heard within its walls. You will see back of the pulpit platform and below the quain

In this church were held some of the great meetings leading up to the famous Boston "tea party." Indeed, it was from this "sanctuary of freedom," as it has been called, that the band of men, disguised as Indians started for the wharf to board the ships and throw overboard the taxed tea.

Did you ever hear the story of how the Old South was "saved"? Reverence for historic landmarks did not run so high years ago as it does today, and in our centennial year of 1876 it was proposed to sell the Old South simply for the value of its bricks and timbers and tear it down that a modern business block might be built on its site. Indeed, it was sold—"knocked down" at auction to a bidder for the meager sum of \$131½!

A great wave of patriotic feelings swept over the city of Boston. The powers and some of the people began to protest against the tearing down of the old "sanctuary of freedom," and a movement was set on foot to raise funds to buy the church from its purchaser and to buy also the ground on which it stood. This good plan might

For ever have succeeded had it not been for one noble and loyal woman in Boston, Mrs. Mary Hemenway, of halcyon memory. When the difficulty of securing funds for the purchase of the old meeting house became known to her she came forward with a gift of \$100,000, and thus the old meeting house was saved to stand as an object lesson to the children of future generations.

Having given such a large sum to help save the Old South meeting house, Mrs. Hemenway felt that it should be something more than a mere silent monument. She determined that it should be a real, living force in our country, and particularly to the children of Boston. She determined that there should be freedom and encouragement to break through and that its arched walls should again echo and re-echo to the sound of patriotic utterances and that some of these utterances should come from the lips of the boys and girls of Boston, and thus the Old South lecture course and the Old South prizes were established. Each year a prize of \$40 and another of \$25 are given to the graduates of the Boston high schools who write the best essays on historic or patriotic topics. The committee having this work in charge announce the subjects in June, just before the schools close, and the competitors must submit their essays the following January. Then on Washington's birthday there is a network gathering of the school children of Boston at the old meeting house, and the names of the prize winners are announced.—St. Nicholas.

**Kongo's Salt Marshes.**

The salt marshes of the Kongo region are to be found in considerable number in the district of Sambali, and there are also many of these marshes in the left bank of the river Lubutu. In general they represent a kind of

rock or rift in the soil. The walls of the rift show first a layer of blackish clay mixed with sand and containing numerous quartz and siliceous pebbles, or more exceptionally black and white shells, fragments of oyster and mussel, and then come a layer of stratified and gray-blue schist. The soil of the depression also contains schist as the greater constituent and is covered by a layer of sandy clay. In order to collect the salt the natives dig a funnel-shaped hole from six to ten feet in diameter and about three feet deep. The cavity soon fills up with a warm and clear water, which is strongly charged with salt. It comes up with considerable pressure, and the liquid seems to boil. The salt is partly precipitated at the bottom of the cavity and mixes with the soil to form a blackish mud. The latter is washed out with hot water to extract salt which is then crystallized from the solution. The product which is thus obtained is of a salty gray color, and its taste is more alkaline than that of European salt.

The Surrender at Sedan.  
Count Hatzfeldt, who bore of Bismarck's character, and his perfect knowledge of French, played a prominent part in the surrender of Emperor Napoleon III. after the battle of Sedan, thus describes the arrangements for the surrender in a letter to his wife, which has been published: "It was a solemn moment when General Fiala, approaching by the side of the hill, drew me fifty paces from the king; he drew me aside, and then proposed to be allowed to deliver the emperor's letter. The king asked him to wait and withdrew to consult with Bismarck and Holke. I took advantage of this moment to approach poor Reille to express my sympathy with him. Bismarck then sent for me. Two chairs were placed one on top of the other and I sat on the upper one and he on the lower. Bismarck debated, and then drew out a draft of the answer. Afterward the king sat down on one of the chairs, I then held the other as a desk, and I read the ink bottle and dictated to him the answer that Reille took with him."

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